

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently Amended) ~~The retractable step of Claim 1,~~ A retractable step for entering and exiting rail vehicles, the retractable step having a surface which can be walked upon and being configured to be extended in an essentially linear direction to bridge a gap between the rail vehicle and a platform, the retractable step comprising:

a leading edge;

a strip being movably connected to the retractable step and extending over an entire length L of the retractable step;

the strip having at least one sensor and arranged to prevent a collision with objects during an extension operation of the retractable step;

wherein, when the retractable step is in an extended position, the strip is at least partially located under the leading edge and the at least one sensor detects one of the following: (1) a position of the strip relative to the retractable step and (2) a force transferred from the strip to the retractable step; and

wherein the strip is a rotatable flap.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~The retractable step of Claim 1,~~ A retractable step for entering and exiting rail vehicles, the retractable step having a surface which can be walked upon and being configured to be extended in an essentially linear direction to bridge a gap between the rail vehicle and a platform, the retractable step comprising:

a leading edge;

a strip being movably connected to the retractable step and extending over an entire length L of the retractable step;

the strip having at least one sensor and arranged to prevent a collision with objects during an extension operation of the retractable step;

wherein, when the retractable step is in an extended position, the strip is at least partially located under the leading edge and the at least one sensor detects one of the following: (1) a position of the strip relative to the retractable step and (2) a force transferred from the strip to the retractable step; and

wherein the strip is a rotatable bracket.

4. (Currently Amended) The retractable step of Claim 42, wherein the strip is a bracket displaceable in a guide.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~The retractable step of Claim 1,~~ A retractable step for entering and exiting rail vehicles, the retractable step having a surface which can be walked upon and being configured to be extended in an essentially linear direction to bridge a gap between the rail vehicle and a platform, the retractable step comprising:

a leading edge;

a strip being movably connected to the retractable step and extending over an entire length L of the retractable step;

the strip having at least one sensor and arranged to prevent a collision with objects during an extension operation of the retractable step;

wherein, when the retractable step is in an extended position, the strip is at least partially located under the leading edge and the at least one sensor detects one of the following: (1) a position of the strip relative to the retractable step and (2) a force transferred from the strip to the retractable step; and

wherein the at least one sensor measures an angle between the strip and the retractable step.

6. (Currently Amended) The retractable step of Claim 42, wherein the at least one sensor is fitted to a front edge of the strip.